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EDUCATIONAL COMMENT

MONEY SPENDING A SCIENCE

How to handle the family income, which according to one investigator is spent largely by women and at the rate of \$130,000 a minute, is one of the subjects to which special attention is directed in the evening schools in home economics, conducted throughout the country, under the national vocational education program.

The management of the family income, according to the annual report of the Federal Board for Vocational Education, represents a division of economics, the importance of which is receiving recognition daily.

Much attention has been devoted during the past year in vocational home economics evening classes for adult women to the teaching of home management and the effective feeding, clothing, and housing of families at low income levels. The income in homes in communities studied by the Board is low for the majority of families—a greater percentage being below the comfort level than above—so that home economics instruction needs constantly to emphasize what can be done on a limited income.

The Board's studies have shown, also,

that much of the illness in homes can be directly controlled by a better selection of food and more intelligent dealing with causes which can be removed or lessened by better hygienic and sanitary practices. For this reason stress has been laid on these factors in evening classes.

That homemakers are especially interested in courses covering child care and training, including proper feeding and clothing, the development of good health practices and habits, and adequate facilities for rest and recreation, is evidenced, the report explains, by requests for such courses. The need and demand for organized training in home making in vocational classes is constantly increasing, it is shown, and the expansion of the program in the states is limited only by the lack of funds for maintenance.

Adult homemakers enrolled in evening vocational home economics classes federally aided in 1931 numbered 124,263, an increase of 26,888 or 27.6 per cent over 1930. This figure does not include more than 10,000 adult women enrolled in vocational home-making classes supported wholly from state or local funds or both.

LIBRARIES DURING THE DEPRESSION

THE part that public libraries are having and may have in the promotion of intelligent thinking and action during times of economic stress is indicated in the following resolution adopted by the Council of the American Library Association and just made public:

"The American Library Association believes that the depression offers a challenge to the public libraries of America, as it does to newspapers, magazines and other agencies for the diffusion of knowledge. The book supply, reading room space and personnel of libraries are being taxed now as never before because of the unprecedented number of readers and students.

Economic insecurity breeds intellectual unrest, sending many thoughtful men and women to books, while idleness and lack of funds increase the popularity of reading as recreation. The loss of a job makes a man think about his educational equipment for another job.

"The American Library Association recognizes the extraordinary difficulties brought about by the economic situation and, while advising all reasonable economy, calls upon library trustees to champion the cause of the library before appropriating bodies, pointing out the necessity of maintaining, in spite of all obstacles, those essential services which promote intelligent thinking and vocational education or re-education, and which help to keep up the public morale."

Reports from libraries in all sections of the country reveal crowded conditions and greatly increased demand for service. A summary of reports from 36 cities exceeding 200,000 population shows an increase of more than 8,000,000—or 10 per cent—in demand for reading material. In some instances an increase in book circulation as great as 42 per cent has been noted. To meet these unusual conditions the American Library Association, through its headquarters office, is acting as a clearing house to keep librarians informed of ways and means of handling budget and administrative problems, as well as the increased call for vocational service to men and women with enforced leisure.

WHY HAVE SCHOOLS?

HORACE MANN said, "In our country and our times, no man is worthy the honored name of statesman who does not include practicable education of the people in all plans of administration."

Let us see if the statesmen themselves agreed with this qualification. Twenty years

or more before American Independence, Benjamin Franklin said: "The good education of youth has been esteemed by wise men in all ages as the surest foundation of the happiness both of private families and of commonwealths." Immediately after Independence, Washington said: "Knowledge is in every country the surest basis of public happiness. In one in which the measures of government receive their impressions so immediately from the sense of the community as in ours, it is proportionately essential." About the same time Jefferson said: "It is an axiom in my mind that our liberty can never be safe but in the hands of the people themselves, and that, too, of the people with a certain degree of instruction. This is the business of the state, and on a general plan." James Madison said: "A popular government without popular information or the means of acquiring it is but a prolog to a farce or a tragedy, or perhaps both. The people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives." More recently Woodrow Wilson said: "Without popular education no government which rests on popular action can long endure; the people must be schooled in the knowledge and if possible in the virtues upon which the maintenance and success of free institutions depend." Herbert Hoover says: "Self-government can succeed only through an instructed electorate. The more complex the problems of the nation become, the greater the need for more and more advanced instruction."

These and thousands of similar expressions from other statesmen, patriots, and authorities on civic affairs prove that schools are necessary to preserve our state and nation and their governments of the people, by the people, and for the people; and of course this means that schools are necessary to preserve all the institutions that have grown up under our form of government. The common schools are the

means of making effective the six purposes of our government set forth in the preamble to the Constitution.

WHY HAVE TEACHERS?

Without teachers there would be no schools; for teachers are the absolutely essential workers that make the schools effective. Teachers constitute the army of defense against the devastating enemy, ignorance, and are just as necessary as any army of defense against any conceivable foreign enemy or domestic rebellion. That is what great statesmen and educators mean when they say that a high general level of trained intelligence is absolutely necessary in a democracy; for the teachers constitute the agency for training the intelligence. Therefore, the state for its own self-preservation provides that teachers be employed; prescribes their qualifications, maintains colleges and universities for their education and special training, and levies taxes for their remuneration.—*Illinois Teacher*.

THE BULL IN THE CHINA SHOP

Commenting on the proposal in Kansas that a new textbook commission be appointed to be composed of "business men with no more than one educator as a member," William Allen White writes in the *Emporia Gazette*:

"A sillier recommendation is not imaginable. The selection of textbooks is not a business man's job. It would be as foolish to put a bunch of doctors in control of selecting a course of study for engineers. The selection of textbooks is an expert's job. It cannot be done by any man hauled in off the street. It must be done by men in the teaching profession."

THE TRAINING OF THE HUMAN PLANT

All animal life is sensitive to environment, but of all living things the child is the

most sensitive. Surroundings act upon it as the outside world acts upon the plate of the camera. Every possible influence will leave its impress upon the child, and the traits which it inherited will be overcome to a certain extent, in many cases being even more apparent than heredity.

The child is like a cut diamond, its many facets receiving sharp, clear impressions not possible to a pebble, with this difference, however, that the change wrought in the child from the influences without becomes constitutional and ingrained. A child absorbs environment. It is the most susceptible thing in the world to influence, and if that force be applied rightly and constantly when the child is in its most receptive condition, the effect will be pronounced, immediate, and permanent.—LUTHER BURBANK.

A nation's concern over education measures its interest in its own future.

As long as the life of society goes on normally, education is generally acknowledged as an important social function, yet it does not attract much public attention; but when some crisis comes, when a depression is felt in the social atmosphere or some political cataclysm occurs, then people turn to education as a remedy and panacea against the evils of the time.—H. G. WELLS.

KNOWLEDGE is in every country the surest basis of public happiness. In one in which the measures of government receive their impressions so immediately from the sense of the community as in ours, it is proportionately essential.—*George Washington*.

IT IS AN AXIOM in my mind that our liberty can never be safe but in the hands of the people themselves, and that, too, of the people with a certain degree of instruction. This is the business of the state, and on a general plan.—*Thomas Jefferson*.